

Inspection of First Steps Preschool

Scout and Guide Centre, Longwick Road, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire
HP27 9HN

Inspection date: 31 March 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy when they arrive at the pre-school. They have adapted well to the changes made, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Children understand that their parents no longer come into the pre-school. They are confident to separate from their parents and are greeted by warm and friendly staff. Children demonstrate that they are happy and feel safe in this very welcoming, inclusive pre-school. Children show a real interest in what staff provide, and spend a long time engaged in their chosen activities. Children are prepared very well for their next stage in learning and for school when the time comes. Older children confidently write their names as they sound out the letters and ask to write the names of their friends. Younger children roll and push malleable materials, developing their fine motor skills to learn to control pens and pencils.

Children are confident communicators. They talk to each other and adults, explaining what they are doing. Children enjoy their activities with staff. For example, they sit together to explore musical instruments and talk about the sounds they make. Children take great pride in their ability to identify sounds without seeing the instrument. Staff expertly expand this further as they challenge children to identify two sounds at the same time.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Parents are extremely happy with the service provided. They speak highly of the care and education their children receive and, appreciate how happy and settled their children are. Parents comment that staff keep them well informed. For example, staff provide details of their children's day and what they have enjoyed doing when collecting their children. In addition, parents access children's online learning journal.
- Staff teach children what is expected of them during daily routines and activities. They are good role models, who provide consistent guidance to children. For example, when children run in the room, staff ask them to stop and explain they will fall over toys and hurt themselves. This helps children understand how to play safely.
- Leaders recruit staff safely. They ensure that new staff are supported by more experienced staff, to help them to become confident and competent in their role. All staff undergo regular supervision sessions. They complete a broad range of training, that focuses intently on the needs of the children attending.
- Staff actively promote children's good health. Children spend time outdoors in the well-resourced garden and get fresh air each day in all weathers. Staff aspire to improve their provision. They are in the process of developing the already good outdoor space to offer a nature area. The aim is to provide even more opportunities for children to explore and investigate natural resources,

minibeasts and growing plants.

- Children benefit from rich learning opportunities when they work in smaller groups and have free-flow access to the outdoors. When this happens, children show high levels of engagement and staff interactions are of good quality. Inside, children develop their imagination as they pretend to be vets and make the animals better. Outside, children catch snowflakes and watch them melt in their hands. However, large-group times are not always well organised. Children become easily distracted and the learning is not as rich as during other times of the day.
- Staff actively seek support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They have detailed knowledge of the very specific needs of each child. Staff work closely with parents, other settings that the children also attend and outside agencies, to agree and constantly update individual care plans. They use any additional funding that children receive successfully to support each child's individual needs.
- Staff observe children closely to find out what they know and can do. They plan activities to follow children's interests and support their next phase in their development. Staff ensure that children's next steps in learning are shared as a team to enable them to work together to support children's individual development. However, at times, plans for children's next steps in learning are not specific enough to identify what children need to learn next.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a secure knowledge of the possible signs that a child may be at risk of harm, and know what procedures to follow if they have concerns. They know what signs may suggest that a child is being exposed to extreme views or behaviour. Staff know the correct procedure to follow should there be concerns about the conduct of a colleague. The leader carries out safer recruitment checks to ensure the ongoing suitability of staff working with children. The setting is secure and routinely checked to ensure the safety of children. Children are well supervised at all times.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- review the organisation and structure of group times to take into consideration the age ranges and individual needs of the children present, to enhance learning opportunities to the highest level
- strengthen all staff's understanding of what children need to learn next to help them build further on their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	116702
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10228187
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	First Steps Preschool (Princes Risborough) Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP522768
Telephone number	07762326772
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2016

Information about this early years setting

First Steps Preschool registered in 1995. It is run by a parent committee. The pre-school operates from the Scout and Guide Centre in Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire. It is open during school term times from 9am until 3pm Monday to Thursday and from 9am until 1pm on Friday. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. It employs seven members of staff, four of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 2, 3 and 4.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Chris Lamey

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the preschool received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the pre-school.
- The pre-school leader joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked about their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the pre-school leader.
- The inspector observed children to assess the interaction between the staff and children.
- The inspector spoke with the pre-school leader throughout the inspection to keep her updated as the inspection progressed.
- The inspector spoke to a sample of parents and received emails from other parents, to gain their views of the service provided.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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